EMSA NEWS

Tracking ships from space: ESA and EMSA SAT-AIS initiative
Tracking of ships using shore-based AIS receivers is now being boosted by an ability to ‘listen’ for ship broadcasts from space. On 26th January, the second SAT-AIS information meeting was held in Lisbon. Delegates attended from EU and European Space Agency Member States, together with the European Commission, and received updates on the ESA-EMSA SAT-AIS project. EMSA presented a recently-commissioned User Benefit Analysis on European space-based AIS. Participants were also informed about the possible set-up of a SAT-AIS Data Processing Centre, and plans for an ESA/EMSA Operational Demonstration Mission (ODEM). The Norwegian Space Centre (NSC) showcased its Norwegian AIS-SAT programme, with EMSA giving a live demonstration of the Norwegian Satellite AIS data stream embedded into SafeSeaNet. Member States confirmed their willingness to receive data from EMSA once it becomes available. On 27th January, a User Requirements Consolidation meeting was held, with industry representatives attending alongside representatives of the EU and ESA Member States, and other EU institutions (the Commission’s DG MOVE, DG ENTR, plus JRC and Europol). A dedicated User Group meeting will now be established by ESA for its Member States, with EMSA possibly attending as an observer.

EU agencies exhibit
From 31st January to 4th February, EMSA participated in the exhibition EU Agencies: The Way Ahead, at the European Parliament in Brussels. The exhibition featured the 28 regulatory Agencies of the European Union. On 1st February, EMSA led a Transport and satellite infrastructure cluster, showcasing the three transport agencies: EMSA, EASA (the European Aviation Safety Agency) and ERA (the European Railways Agency), together with the GNS Supervisory Authority. Alfons Guinier, Secretary General of the European Community Shipowner’s Association (ECSA), gave a short presentation on current challenges and opportunities in the shipping industry. The four-day exhibition presented the diverse EU Agencies to Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), at the nerve centre of the EU.

EMSA studies Ro-Pax stability
EMSA’s study on Ro-Ro passenger vessel stability is in the home straight.
Between 7th and 11th February, the University of Strathclyde organised the final model test series in the premises of Vienna Model Basin Ltd, concluding nearly seven weeks of tests. Two appointed EMSA experts (Andrew Scott from the (UK) Maritime and Coastguard Agency and Sifis Papageorgiou from EMSA Unit B.1.2) witnessed these tests, which should validate the new stability criteria to be proposed by the contractor.

**Ensuring polluters pay: CleanSeaNet legal workshop**
The rationale behind Directive 2005/35/EC on ship-source pollution – and the CleanSeaNet service that supports it – is similar to that of speed cameras on roads. By increasing the risk of being caught in the act, shipowners are discouraged from polluting the seas, rules are better-respected, and, overall, behaviour is changed for the better. With a view to ensuring effective enforcement, EMSA organised a workshop on 15th and 16th February to discuss how the illegal discharge enforcement chain could be improved. The workshop gathered operational actors responsible for spill detection and response, including CleanSeaNet users, authorities responsible for vessel inspections in ports, and administrative and judicial enforcement authorities. Other representatives included the Regional Agreements, informal networks of prosecutors and global law enforcement, together with a representative from the EU Commission.

**US Coast Guard LRIT-IDE team visits EMSA**
A United States Coast Guard team, responsible for the operations of the International LRIT Data Exchange (IDE), visited EMSA in the week of 21st to 25th February. The aim of the visit was to transfer the technical knowledge on the IDE system that will be hosted and operated by EMSA by the end of 2011. Several workshops were conducted with the EMSA ICT and IDE staff. The USCG team, led by Greg Mason, also discussed the next steps of this important project, including the status report to be presented at Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 89) in May. The outcome of the visit was very positive and the good co-operation was appreciated by all participants, it was reported.

**On the EMSA website**